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THE FAMILY

I have often noticed, in burning a pile of dead leaves, that the mass that seems burned through will, if turned over with the rake, burst into fresh flame. Down under the mound, smothered by weight and closeness, were many fragments that needed only air and freedom to burst into golden blaze . . . To turn it [society] top to bottom now and then would liberate brilliant human combustions that now lie choked.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

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DAVID H. HOLBROOK, *Executive Secretary*

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ORGANIZING FAMILY SOCIAL WORK

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THE PLACE OF INSTITUTIONAL CARE¹

ANNE P. HINCKS

Executive Secretary, Bethesda Society, Boston

I SHALL not try to cover the question of whether—provided an entirely new society for child care were to be founded—child placing or institutional care, or a combination of the two, would be more advisable; but I shall limit myself to the situation as we find it in Massachusetts today, illustrating this by the experience of the small organization which I represent. For I assume that I am included in this morning's list of speakers on account of my connection with the Bethesda Society, which still maintains a small institution as an integral part of its work and is carrying on the original purpose as expressed by its founders 108 years ago. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the purpose remains the same though the expression of it has changed from "aiding the reformation of penitent females, and affording such instruction and encouragement as shall enable them to return to the way of virtue" to "the re-education of the wayward girl."

The authorities who, in the past, have emphasized the superior advantages of child placing, apparently felt that their pronouncement would pretty well settle the situation, and that to say "Off with their heads" like the Red Queen in *Alice in Wonderland* was sufficient to cause all institutions to lay their heads promptly on the executioner's block. Indeed I have been credibly informed that there was a time when the death of our

organization was considered so imminent that the spoils had been apportioned among a group of survivors. But have many of us welcomed execution? Far from it. At the present time over 12,000 children are receiving institutional care in Massachusetts.

What has prevented the death of the Bethesda Society from natural or other causes? Primarily, the conviction firmly held by the Board of Managers that their special work—dealing with a group of delinquent and semi-delinquent girls—called for the maintenance of an institution, coupled with the frank acknowledgment of certain difficulties and a determination to meet them to the best of their ability.

I believe there are very few organizations of any kind which can maintain an existence for over one hundred years, or even a considerably shorter period, in so flexible a form and so responsive to changing community needs that they will find it unnecessary to have periods of readjustment.

In dealing with individuals we have found that a first step toward their restoration to usefulness is an analysis of their disabilities, some of which we list under poor environment, poor heredity, malnutrition, maladjustment, neglect. These terms may be equally helpful in analyzing the difficulties of institutions:

"Poor environment" may have a double interpretation—the actual location of the buildings, or the failure to keep up the many community contacts which are open even to

¹ Given at the Massachusetts Conference for Social Work, Swampscott, November 12, 1924.

institutions in spite of what their opponents say to the contrary.

It is easy to see why we suffer from "poor heredity." The institutional form of child care is the older form of care, and we inherit with it a long tradition of methods and customs. If, instead of interpreting the spirit of the founders in present day terms, we cling to antiquated methods which may have been suitable fifty years ago but are badly out of place today, our heredity is an element of weakness.

We can fairly say that an institution trying to maintain itself on a fraction of the necessary budget is suffering from "malnutrition" or, as a child suffers from malnutrition on a copious but badly balanced diet, malnutrition of an institution may occur with a budget reasonably large in size but unwisely distributed.

That institution is "maladjusted" which has lost its real sense of service to the community, is uncertain as to what its function is, and has to hunt about for stray objects of care.

The "neglect" which an institution may suffer from is often so serious as to bring about an aggravation of all these other difficulties. This occurs when the other welfare organizations in the community virtually ostracize it, looking upon themselves as leaders in intelligent work and, in their anxiety to uphold the standards of their own organizations, looking askance at those they consider more backward instead of trying to draw them into a general community program.

Now don't we find that there are periods when institutions suffer from some such difficulties as these? We thought that we did and, as in dealing with individuals, we thought the next step was not death but an effort to better the situation.

We improved our "environment" by moving from the house on Rutland Street (which when it was first built had been surrounded by open fields, but is now in the center of the lodging house district) to the village community of Waverley, where our pleasant house is surrounded by three acres of land that give us plenty of room for our flower and vegetable gardens, croquet ground, and sport field. Furthermore, we attend the town churches; three carefully

chosen girls go to public school every year; in summer the three each week whose conduct marks are highest are taken by one of our teachers to the Brookline swimming tank. Volunteer workers from Radcliffe, the Sargent School of Physical Education, and many others supplement our work in various ways.

We also maintain an office right in the center of things on Beacon Hill, with the Children's Aid Association below us, the Church Home Society above, and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children across the street. Could there be any better environment?

As for "poor heredity"—we have grafted new ideas on to the old stock. There is no more real reason why admissions to an institution should depend on one interview written down by a matron in a large book than that admissions to child placing societies should.

We have added case work to institutional care. We carefully investigate new cases and, when the girls are ready to leave the institution—or school, as we prefer to call it—we continue our supervision, placing them in foster homes under the care of trained visitors, who are engaged for that purpose.

Though we have kept the name held by the society since 1854, we have changed the name of the building itself from "The Refuge for Penitent Females" to the "Orchard Home School."

We try to make the keynote of the life in the Orchard Home School, and of our whole work, positive not negative. In the School, we emphasize not the restraint of the girl but her development (we have teachers, not matrons) and in the whole work we show that refraining from wrongdoing is less than half of life, that the goal to aim for is doing something worth while.

To remedy "malnutrition," we decided on a different distribution of expenses. We limited ourselves to a smaller number of girls in the School (but, taking both the Placing Department and the School, we have a considerably larger number under care). We kept the amount of investment in our new plant as low as possible in order to have adequate funds for running expenses. We definitely recognized the fact

that we must raise some of our budget from contributions.

When we entered on this period of our development, one of the best recognized authorities in children's work in the country commented, "But where are you going to get any girls?"—the inference being that he considered us permanently "maladjusted." We ourselves, however, knew the field of work with girls and the difficulties in placing difficult girls and believed that we had a definite contribution to make to this field. Perhaps the best answer to his comment is that during this last week, whenever I have wanted to work on this paper, I have had to leave our building and establish myself out of reach of the telephone—to escape the importunities of those who felt that my time would be much better employed investigating their candidates for admission to the Orchard Home School!

It is so long since we have felt "neglected" that it is hard to remember just what we did to overcome that sensation of being wallflowers from which we once suffered. Perhaps the two greatest factors have been (1) our admission to the Boston Council of Social Agencies where, in the Children's Section, the small agency stands on the same footing as the large; and (2) the immense amount of help of all kinds that we have received from the Judge Baker Foundation, which has been referring interesting cases to us ever since its early days in Boston. A third element is reciprocity—we gave a good many parties ourselves of one kind or another, so we had to be invited out in return and—another very important point—we definitely entered on the following policy: While we maintained in our own minds a clear idea of the type of girl we wished ultimately to reach, so far as age, ability, and character went, we accepted from a wide range of agencies wherever we possibly could, first applications that fell considerably below this standard, believing that if we could demonstrate with this group that we were trying to do a thorough and conscientious piece of work, later applications would be of a better calibre. This policy has justified itself, and has resulted in bringing us in touch with a large range of agencies, thus enabling us now to exercise a considerable degree of choice as to admissions.

We find that for our special group our method of care has several definite advantages. In the first place, everybody understands us. I find it very difficult to get parents to understand the advantages of child placing. A letter that we recently received from a father, who was perfectly satisfied while his daughter remained in our School, illustrates this. For special reasons we placed her rather sooner than usual in a good foster home, and he writes: "As you have outlined it in your letter to me, I should say this might be a good place for Ellen for a while, but I myself cannot get over the idea of my girl living under the direction of someone else, the whole thing does not appeal to me very strongly. As to Ellen's return home, may I ask of you when you think it will be? You may think that I am a bit more anxious about this than I ought to be, but really it seems so unnatural for a home to be in one place and its people distributed all around here and there in other peoples' homes. It is not my idea of home at all."

The difficult older girl when first placed in a foster home, particularly a girl who needs much supervision and training (the kind of a girl we want to reach) is only too ready to over-emphasize the amount of service required of her, and be blind to the very real service given by the foster mother in return, while our girls in the institution do really seem to understand what we are trying to do, and to give us credit for it.

Another advantage is that of having the girl during a considerable period of re-education under the influence of one set of standards. Every placing worker knows that many really difficult girls often fail to hold their first homes, and have to be replaced a number of times during their first year. Now, did you ever know two homes in which the standards of housekeeping were exactly alike? One woman wants the berries washed before they are put on the table, another thinks it destroys the flavor or, as a friend of mine once said, "The world is divided into two halves: one made up of the women who rinse their dishes before they go into the dishpan, and the other made up of those who scald them when they come out." This difference extends to matters which bear more closely on moral conduct.

I know of a child who lived for quite a time in a foster home where it was expected that she would go to the pantry if she was hungry when she came home from school and help herself. She had to be moved to another home equally good in many ways, and here she was complained of to her visitor for stealing, because she removed one of four large pickles from a bottle. There certainly are definite elements of confusion here.

Again, how often we find in placing the difficult and untrained girl that, like the snail, she carries her house with her, all that is undesirable in her new school and place of residence gravitating toward her. This is often far from the girl's fault. She is not acceptable to the better element and has to choose between poor associations or none at all, or at least associations that seem to her so artificial as to be hardly better than none at all.

A period of preliminary training in manners and morals often makes it possible for a girl to maintain herself permanently on a much higher plane when she returns to the community. We find that the amount of replacing of our girls is comparatively small when the nature of the group is taken into account.

Then too there is the girl who responds better to group life. On the social side the girl gets a definite sense of belonging to something. It is her School. The teachers, the buildings, the other girls are hers in a very special sense. It has its direct bearing on conduct. Someone asked me the other day, "Is the effect of the group influence due to seeing others doing the same thing?" Yes, there is much in this, but there is also the reverse side—that of not seeing them

not doing it. Very much the same point was made earlier in the paper, that is, that standards of conduct, both in manners and morals, in any community (no matter how good) are not nearly as uniform as we assume them to be for practical purposes. The girl whose own group standards have been inconsistent and self-contradictory and who is forcibly jerked into a totally new setting is often unable to strike a balance among the differences that she is likely to find. By careful help and training, a group of girls who have been pretty much failures up to date, in the protected environment of the right sort of institution, may achieve a series of successes in behavior that build up their self-respect more readily than under the more severe demands made upon them in the foster home and community. We are learning more and more to understand that "nothing succeeds like success," and successful conduct in the School may gradually be translated into successful conduct in the community.

Many other institutions have had much the same experience as ours, and have worked out their special problem of relationship to the community.

Reverting to our starting point, "The Place of Institutions": our experience leads us to hold the two following points of view important. First, not so much is the question whether we are an institution or not—but *what kind* of an institution are we? Second (and growing out of this), does our institution have some direct and vital relationship to community needs? If both of these points are satisfactorily met, we believe the place of the institution is satisfactorily established.

RELATIONS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CASE WORK AGENCIES¹

(The Service Private Agencies Can and Should Render to Public Agencies during the Interval when the Latter Are Finding Themselves and Endeavoring to Secure Adequate Support)

DAVID C. ADIE

General Secretary, Buffalo Charity Organization Society

IN approaching any discussion of a topic such as the one before us there would seem to be two main forms of consideration: We can, if we choose, attempt to establish the experiences of a great many cities; a questionnaire might be prepared which would attempt to lay down certain situations, and by means of the answers one could draw certain deductions. On the other hand, we might leave the idea of questionnaires aside and simply attempt to build up a thought from generally accepted principles of case work. I have chosen the latter method for a variety of reasons. In the first place, this and kindred subjects are being discussed a great many times in this Conference and, in addition to the actual Conference discussions, Miss Gertrude Vaile has presented to the American Association for Organizing Family Social Work a tentative report based on the returns of 162 questionnaires, representing opinions of 38 states and the Canadian provinces. It almost seems as if we have been discussing this question since time immemorial. Scarcely a conference of any sort but this matter comes up for discussion—and to secure any new point of view seems almost impossible.

It would be a sad commentary on the work which has been carried forward by our predecessors in social work if the cumulative influence of effort did not have a reflection in every department of life and thought. The modern community—a composite relationship of a variety of organisms—must naturally show an influence flowing and intermingling, but suggesting a social law of gravity tending toward the center of things. Inevitably, then, one finds the expression of altruism and humanitarianism reflecting itself in the ordinary thought of the ordinary situation until the time arrives when automatically we accept practices by the govern-

mental authorities in a great variety of social enterprises. So far as relief work is concerned, we have a long heritage and a great many traditions. European social life, even preceding the establishment of this nation, had already embarked on certain minor social adventures: We had the urge and influence of great religious movements expressing themselves through institutions which were closely connected with the state. In more modern times some nations have advanced the theory of the superstate, embodying the principle of paternalism which remains in the realm of debate.

The peculiar position of American life will probably prevent the need for early consideration of social movements by the all-powerful and supreme agency of the state. The genius of America lies partly in the development and control of idealism which, fortunately or otherwise, reflects itself in a large measure through individualism. Nevertheless, we find that in the early Colonial days, without much scientific thought, communities were placing the responsibility for the relief of the distressed and suffering upon governmental bodies. Today we see the same principle at work. Large numbers of our people are already at work to secure recognition of some principle of social insurance: mother's allowance, insurance against old age, sickness, and unemployment, and so on. The group interest which is basic to all modes of association is a national grouping within the community. Not only is it natural; it develops to some extent the possession on the part of the group of an "ism," which in its nature is a finality. The net result is that we press forward toward the mark of our own establishment and, being blessed with at least a pretence of tolerance, we are willing to accept recognition of our principle without securing adequate machinery and funds to guarantee its functioning. That is to say, while we strive

¹ Given at the National Conference of Social Work, Toronto, July 2, 1924, Round Table 2.

for social insurance of one kind or another, we seem to be perfectly willing to place a law upon our statute books which may or may not be mandatory, but which lacks adequate financial support, and our argument is that the entering of the thin end of the wedge is the wise part of our politics. We assume that in days to come we will be able to rectify the weaknesses of our position. It may be seriously contended that this is a bad thing. Would it not be more advantageous, from the community point of view, if we were to extend adequate social insurance at one point rather than inadequate insurance at several points? The same principle, of course, holds good in matters relating to relief of distress and suffering. The realization of the existence of a public body charged with meeting the problems of suffering in our community is too often an opiate to our partly awakened social conscience. So long as the agency exists, inertia on the part of the public will prevent observation of the appalling results which are produced in a great many of our public relief agencies.

It is evident that the private agency may institute the principle of restricting intake in order that the quality and standard of work may be maintained in its contact with the individual family. The public agency on the other hand is, by very nature of law, in danger of compulsion to expand itself to the point of dissipation of its energy. It is all very easy for the executive of a private agency to keep reflecting on the functioning of public agencies when he is governed by a policy established by a board of directors who have the opportunity to discuss social questions in relation to experience and advancing standards. The same executive would be in a much more delicate position were he charged with the responsibility of carrying out a law which may, in many particulars, carry us outside the application of this principle. The taxpayer, be he never so humble, feels that the mere existence of his name on a tax roll places him in a position to make demands upon a variety of public social agencies. The interplay of politics gives one the impression that our public agencies are more susceptible to the varying winds of tempests than is the private agency. Outgoing and incoming admin-

istrators may cause agencies to fluctuate in their service without the matter becoming obvious to the general public. This is true not only of relief agencies but of public health and other forms of social enterprise. Then too, no one principle can apply as effectively in public agencies as in the sphere of private effort. The private agency may adjust itself in the community because it has within its own power the formulation of a variety of policies and practices based on the experience of other communities and appraised solely on the basis of effectiveness; whereas the public agency is subject to many influences which not only vary with the individual community but reflect a great variety of factors.

Private agencies are rather inclined to a belief in their own superiority, but this, after all, is a matter of relativity. Organisms must be subject to their environment; whatever may be the qualities inherent, they can never develop without or apart from environmental influence. Even in our private agencies, when viewed from the inside, there is a great deal that can be compared with the fluctuation of the public enterprise. No executive but must have in his own mind a number of instances where he had to emphasize the Miltonic phrase, "they also serve who only stand and wait." It is our ability (as executives in private agencies) to wait as well as to pursue that enhances our strength and position in the community. Too frequently the private agency has failed to recognize the tremendous difficulties which face the public administrator and this has led to a sense of superiority when, after all, our judgment may only seemingly be one of quality. We recognize in social work a variety of influences playing around every social problem and never for a moment concede that any problem can be considered apart from the recognized principles of case work. It is infantile to give consideration to the surface effects of a social problem. One needs to isolate the factors because it is only then that one can use the microscope.

The case worker is essentially the user of a microscope and his diagnosis is only sufficient when he has the facilities not only for observing the data in inception, but for periodic reconsideration of the evolving variety of factors in the development of his

problem. That is to say, given a set of ingredients in the situation, at the time, let us say, of the first interview, we shall find, if we proceed by the case work method, that there is a constant merging of forces into new and varied combinations. That being our experience in case work, why is it that when we come to larger problems that involve organizations and groups we cease to apply the case method of thinking and reflect merely emotion and prejudice?

My contention at this point is that no mere assembly of data, inherent in the experience of a great many of the communities in America, will ever prove the solution to our problem. What we must do is treat our material scientifically (in regard to our philosophy of work) so that a few principles, in accord with our standards, may be applied; rather than attempt to apply some general method to one community situation merely because it has been successfully used in another. The division of work between public and private case work agencies, as so clearly pointed out by Miss Vaile, cannot be considered as a theoretical problem. It must be related to the standard of work, policy, personnel, executive conception, and many other things. It is my opinion that the interrelation and interaction of the public and private agencies in the field of relief and service must be approached by the case work method rather than by the application of some plausible remedy. To illustrate my point of view: The existence of both public and private agency in a community involves the development of a principle regarding supplementary relief by the private agency to the client in the care of the public agency. The natural difficulties which arise in such a situation determine a new policy on the part of the executive in the private agency. In conference with his associates he decides that under no circumstances will supplementary aid be extended; presumably his theory is that the mere denial of support will produce a situation leaving the public agency responsible to a natural law and the development of new standards by the necessity of existence. It is an application, conceivably, of the principle of natural law. Left to its own devices, an animal must starve or find nutrition. If it fails to adjust itself to its environment, weakness produces

death. If the urge for life is strong enough, it will adjust itself in such a way as to maintain existence even if it be not very much above the line of the minimum. In organizations approximately the same thing happens. If the organization is not willing to adjust itself to its environment, if it lacks strength and refuses to employ all its faculties, it has no right to exist. The struggle for the survival of the fittest ensues.

We all know, of course, that this principle is not so entirely simple. Some of us will feel no reaction to it one way or the other. If an executive takes a definite position, he must, of necessity, come to the logical conclusion. He must function adequately, or he increases rather than diminishes suffering. Unless steps are taken to understand thoroughly the situation and unless he is willing to project himself actively into the problem, he and his organization must assume responsibility for that suffering. On the other hand, he has the option of developing a program of work whereby, through the development of new forces and influences, he will establish a definite policy and practice on the part of the public which will meet the particular situation under consideration. No one can keep himself from seeing and being responsible for suffering. It is the old parable of the Samaritan over again. Not only must we be willing to place the victim upon the back of our own ass and carry him to the inn where succor may be obtained, but we must be devoid of the shortcomings of those who have preceded us. The shortcoming of the passersby lies in the fact that they were able to see only one side of the street. It was the Samaritan's ability to see the two sides of the road which led to the discovery of his distressed brother. So it seems to me we might sum up the relation between the private and the public agencies: Each one must lend its influence to the other. The facts seem to me to be clear that so far as the present situation is concerned no modern community can afford to be without both types of agencies.

It is taken for granted, of course, that all of us are conscious of a growing appreciation, on the part of governmental bodies, of social effort at the present time. We desire to see both types of agencies engaged in accomplishing whatever social work they

have undertaken, to the best of their ability, in the direct line of modern practice and in serving according to the principles of the case work method. That is to say, we distinguish relief as merely one of the factors in the situation; it becomes a key and only a key to the opening of many doors—on no account can it be considered as a master key to unlock all doors. The support which may be obtained from the private agency is too often considered in the line of finances when as a matter of fact what we all desire is the fullest possible participation in all aspects of family welfare work. If the public agency is not on a basis of friendliness with the private agency, then relationship is not such that either may obtain the inspiration and impetus which is in line with our conception of advancing standards of work. May we not assume that the failure on our part correctly to interpret our aim in social work, entirely apart from the question of public or private agency, may be a potential factor in the lack of support experienced?

The question may also be raised as to whether we are making the greatest possible use of existing social machinery and practice. As an illustration one might take the practice which surrounds the social service exchange. Has the social worker in the community a thorough conception of the possibilities inherent in this agency? Does he use it merely as a place for the registration of data—or as the point of entrance into an adequate social practice? In other words, do the private and public agencies in our community conceive of the more extensive use of the social service exchange? Do they see it as the receptacle of information which enables them to appreciate the social heritage and condition of the client? If this agency were properly used, there would inevitably be a general rise in the standards of family welfare societies—public or private. And this is particularly true, it seems to me, in that period of time when the public agency is attempting to find itself (for, like any other organism, it must experience a period of orientation). Our growth and standing in the community is not affected merely by conditions outside our organizations but to a greater extent than we realize by what obtains within our portals.

My purpose, then, is not to classify the

services which may be rendered, but to emphasize basic relationships. The main consideration for me is not what particular service I may render in an interim period, but rather what the every-day practice between the agencies shall be (which will lay the emphasis on qualitative matters). If this is done, I assume the development of the philosophy of social practice. However short we may fall in our day-by-day contact with social problems, it is most certainly true that our conception of objective is infinitely more powerful in its compulsion to advancement than the mere mechanics of the job can possibly be. A technique may be atrophied but an idealism will remain dynamic. A technique may be a shackle but an idealism will be a call to advancement. A technique may be a source of discouragement in one or the other agency by its mere existence or non-existence, whereas a common idealism will be a constant source of comradeship. The private agency alone cannot advance the situation of social workers in the community. The public must play its part; and unless the public agency is won over to the conception of our job, we cannot possibly effect much of a transformation. All of us have known public officials who, under the control of various influences, are not in sympathetic relationship and appreciative understanding of the ever-varying factors in the public agency situation, and have deliberately detached themselves to a place where a policy of *laissez faire* controls the situation.

I do not believe that one can lay down at a Conference such as this any set of principles which can be taken back into a variety of communities and which will present either the quality of Aladdin's lamp or be in the nature of an open Sesame. As Carlyle has pointed out, there is no Morrison's pill. The greatest assistance which can be rendered by the private agency to the public agency during the time when the latter is finding itself is not, in my opinion, a matter of money, division of work, or any of the other factors which are generally considered. It is rather the common acceptance on the part of both agencies of the principle of case thinking and the united effort for a common conception of each agency's standards of social practice and the willingness on the

part of both groups to give themselves continuously to the development of the personalities within the situation and the increasing of educational backgrounds; it is the willingness to recognize the deficiencies on both sides of the fence while realizing that considerable gain can be made by simply refraining from unfortunate and unnecessary emphasis on mistakes. There must be, on the part of all of us, a gathering together in a common field of association in order that we may better interpret each other's functioning in the community. It is the spirit of the enterprise that will lead to the method of accomplishment. I am not concerned with imposing upon my fellow a social practice which has been useful to me. I am concerned in that common search for a common dynamic and a common practice in relation to advancing standards of case work. It seems to me that with this accomplishment we can set out to obtain, without any spirit of disparagement, an adequate service for our clients. If the question of money or the question of social service is involved, it would not appear to me to be significant without full consideration being given to the codetermining factors within the particular community and the individual situation.

We live in moments and not in years, and it is by the flash of our common understand-

ing that we may ignite the flame for service. What greater service can we render than to bring to our individual situation the case work method of separating the facts that they may be recognized in relativity; and in this knowledge to press forward toward the mark which is our high calling? The private agency must support the public agency during the period when it is finding itself, by temporary or permanent practices and policies developed in the light of the individual community. It must, through its board of directors and public contacts, interpret its task and methods of accomplishment. It should, by the development of the highest form of social work within its own confines, make possible advancing standards within the public agency. It should be prepared to support, by all reasonable and legitimate methods, before the representatives of government, the public agency in its appeal for adequate tools—whether they be money, visitors or a particular form of service. The creation of a public opinion by education is a wider and more sympathetic appreciation of our common objectives. Individual problems in particular situations should be decided in conference, held by a fairly light hand, and decided in the light of our common case work experience and ideals.

A NEW NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

THE American Association for Organizing Family Social Work announces the election of Linton B. Swift, of Louisville, Kentucky, to succeed Mr. Holbrook as Executive Secretary July 1, 1925.

The choice is a happy one. Like many others in social work, Mr. Swift brings to his professional activities in the family field the fruit of his experiences in another profession—law. His work in France as an army officer and as a member of the Commission on New States of the Peace Commission brought him in touch with varied problems of human relationships. On his return from France in 1919, Mr. Swift became educational secretary and later assistant secretary of the United Charities in St. Paul, whose work he had previously known through service on a case committee. His work here was notable and in February, 1922, he was engaged as general Secretary of the Family

Service Organization in Louisville, Kentucky. The Louisville society has made marked and rapid progress under Mr. Swift's leadership. He himself has been conspicuously influential in social work developments in the city and state.

Mr. Swift has for two years been chairman of the Finance Committee of the Association and is already familiar with many problems of the organization. Through his correspondence with member societies as well as through his own work with the Louisville society he has acquired a vivid picture of the inter-relationships and interdependence of the agencies in the field of family work.

Mr. Swift brings to his new office a vision of the possibilities of family social work based on concrete knowledge and an active interest in its effective development.

THE FAMILY

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EDITORIAL

THE *New York Times* recently published a conversational interview with Willa S. Cather, who ranks highly among that small group of personality novelists whose works are a fount of inspiration to the social case worker. It centered around a discussion of culture and art in these United States of ours; whether the stupendous production of books meant anything much; the materialistic measuring of success by money; the restlessness "that does not make for beauty," and so on, quite characteristic and searching.

Then we quite unexpectedly collided with this:

"If we have no tradition of years behind us, the people who come to live here have. Are they contributing anything to the artistic expression of the country?"

Again that twinge crossed her face. This time it was plain that the question had started it.

"Contribute? What shall they contribute? They are not peddlers with something to sell; they are not gypsies. They have come here to live in the sense that they lived in the Old World, and if they were let alone their lives might turn into the beautiful ways of their homeland. But they are not let alone. Social workers, missionaries—call them what you will—go after them, hound them, pursue them and devote their days and nights toward the great task of turning them into stupid replicas of smug American citizens. This passion for Americanizing everything and everybody is a deadly disease with us. We do it the way we build houses. Speed, uniformity, dispatch, nothing else matters."

A succeeding paragraph seems to indicate that Miss Cather is thinking particularly of settlement work and one sadly regrets that she must certainly have had contacts not with the best of settlements—Hull House, for example, with its fine and deep ap-

preciation and encouragement of beauty through infinitely varied expressions of the vivid peoples which abide near her gates, and as sadly must one acknowledge that much of settlement work is just as crassly destructive of the marrow and aroma of these peoples, as she indicates.

But the settlement can speak for itself. Our first reaction was as to the social case worker. First, violent protest at this misrepresentation; then, in all fairness, questioned by some inner voice, "How often have you seen the finer appreciations of these foreign cultures in case records or discussed by case workers? Have the pathetic survivals of the old home across the water, the few relics and all they signified, been realized in their full significance? Have you seen the highly sensitized families of a sensitive and artistic nation viewed from the aspect of their possible artistic yearnings which to them may be greater than all else that is material?" "Yes," we could reply, "in case records, in conversations with case workers, we have seen it—but more often it has not been there."

Not that one can accuse the real social case worker of what Willa Cather mistakenly accuses her (if she is thinking of the case worker), of participating in that particular type of so-called Americanization which would crush out all that these foreign-born have of peculiar culture and tradition, which can so infinitely deepen the channels of expression in this country, simply by their living their lives with only such adjustments as a changed environment requires.

It is not such positive betrayal of every canon of case work that we are guilty of; rather is it not a lack of the deepest, fullest appreciation of these fundamental values? We grant them and then we forget them or are not skillful enough to observe them.

But Miss Cather raises an even more fundamental challenge. She speaks of "poking into personal affairs" and very directly raises the issue which, as I interpret it, would be practically "who are these who meddle in the lives of others?" She is thinking of the immigrant family but, conceivably, she would have the same reaction in viewing a back stream, native stock, American community similarly "meddled with." This raises a most interesting ques-

tion, particularly as it comes from a distinguished writer who has so vividly portrayed the souls of people.

Is it that the only natural environmental influences upon life must be unconscious to be valid? But surely she would recognize the absurdity of that. What about the church and the school which has definite designs upon the family? If we grant that the soul may be influenced by something consciously designed to influence it, then indeed we must searchingly analyze the motivation behind such conscious attempts to determine whether it aims to inspire to individual

achievement, born of a smugness or complacency which would mould rather than inspire. Heaven knows, that smugness may creep in, but it can be certainly said of modern social case work that it is more quickly challenged than it used to be. It presents its ugly head with pressure of work always, it is a very natural human weakness fairly rampant in the kind of Americanization which all real social workers so cordially detest. If the distinguished author of *My Antonia* could only see it, really one of her devoted allies is the modern social worker, even though her contacts with people and souls are formalistically arrived at.

ORGANIZATION AND SUPERVISION OF FIELD WORK FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE SOCIAL AGENCY¹

ELLA H. MACKAY

District Superintendent, Philadelphia Society for Organizing Charity

TO ANY agency interested in training, the organization and supervision of students' field work becomes a question of vital importance. To maintain a fine balance between fair value to the student as a potential social worker or as an individual and justifiable return on the part of the agency to the community it is organized to serve calls for thoughtful consideration and evaluation of students' work. If the agency purporting to give training is unable to supervise closely the individual field work of students, or if, in so doing, the agency's standards of case work or of meeting the community's needs fall, field work becomes a liability to all concerned. Through careful organization of field work time, however, with the supervisor in the agency knowing definitely in advance that she may rely on the school not to interfere with the student's agency time, this problem of balance becomes simplified. One may then look for more specific problems which arise in an agency because of its willingness to assume its share in preparing students for social work.

In most large agencies and in many small ones there are case workers of experience with interest and ability in teaching, in student development, and in rising professional

standards, who are glad to add to their day's work the supervision of one or more students. Unless a person has this interest the student is a drag, for the most as well as the least promising students demand time beyond all preconceived ideas. To the agency supervisor, however, whatever may be her interest in training, the welfare of her families must come first and she is often forced, because of the school schedule, either to withhold experience from the student or to subject a family to haphazard treatment through irregular visits or too frequent change of visitors. If a student comes for a month and then remains away a month, it becomes impossible for the case worker to play fair either with the student or the family. Treatment becomes blocked through irregular field work time.

Again, keeping clearly before her the paramount importance of her client's welfare, the supervising case worker must weigh carefully the risk involved in substituting a partially trained student for a better trained visitor. She must not let her teaching zeal override the clients' needs; she must hold fast to the realization that her clients are human beings in need of careful considerate treatment, and are not teaching material. Further, she must remember that faulty contacts with employers, with doctors, with benevolent individuals, and so on, may react

¹ Given at the Pennsylvania Conference on Social Welfare, Wilkes-Barre, February 16, 1924.

not only against the prestige of her own organization but against the work of all organized social effort in the community. To give well rounded training she must select the students' work; but family situations do not develop on a selective scheme and they rarely work into a two-day-a-week schedule. Emergencies in the district may take the supervisor far afield at the moment she planned to confer with the student, making it necessary to offer the student work which he may not find interesting or be ready for. The big problem then for the supervisor in the agency is arranging the work so as to give the student a maximum of training and responsibility with minimum harm to clients and to the agency's work in the community.

What schedule of work brings the greatest experience to the student, the least harm to clients, and the most help to the agency? For several years in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania School for Social and Health Work has arranged the schedule for the regular students in such a way that before classes begin, with the exception of a weekly conference, the students spend four weeks in the field, giving full time to the agency. Following this is a period of one and one-half to two days in the field per week, followed by another block of four weeks' full time. Then the student resumes the day and a half or two day schedule but in June comes again for four weeks to the agency. This plan has worked remarkably well from the point of view of the Society for Organizing Charity and far excels any other scheme we have tried.

In the initial four weeks the student gets oriented in the agency, acquires a feeling of belonging and of responsibility, gives a fair idea of her potentialities, and gains a preliminary knowledge of the workings of the agency, its underlying methods and ideals, its place in the community, and its co-operating agencies. In the weeks that follow, theory outstrips practice; the student becomes critical and by February needs close contact with actuality. She can begin to assume real responsibility, carries a few difficult situations through the weeks that follow, and by June can be tried out with her shoulder under the burden of an average case load, meeting emergencies as they arise and being treated like the regular staff.

Such an arrangement makes for continuity not only of training but of treatment of families and forces the student to meet responsibility. Not only does it give the student longer, more intensive field work experience, but because of its continuity makes it more possible for the supervisor to assign treatment problems, problems to which the regular staff, with heavy case loads, might be obliged to give slight attention. We have been interested to see exceptionally creditable work done under this scheme.

Such an arrangement spoils the training superintendents for the more inadequate field work periods of special students from the school and from colleges. As a group we stand firmly for blocks of full time field work experience preceded by, followed by, or interspersed with continuous, uninterrupted weekly field work of not less than one full day over a period amounting to at least one school year. As a group we question our right to subject our families to the visits of ever-changing, short term students and to let our organization stand before the community as advocating such treatment. Co-operating agencies who do not undertake the training job do not always understand; how then can our families and the non-professional members of the community? We feel that the agency has the right to insist that students shall become assets—not liabilities—in so far as they can; that work shall not be so broken into that treatment of a family must change hands regardless of the effect on the family. While holding to this we realize that academic schedules must dovetail, and that unreasonable demands should not be made. Too often the student is caught between the demands of the classroom and the agency. Close co-operation is needed, with frequent conferences between the teacher of case work, the supervisor of field work, and the supervising case worker in the agency. In some instances the work in the field is wholly divorced from the work in the classroom, except as the student makes the contact through reports.

In the agency we feel we owe the students we accept as complete a training as it is possible for us to give in the time at our disposal, including participation in staff and community conferences, frequent consultations with the supervisor (at the beginning

there should be daily conferences), and opportunities to have varied contacts with other agencies. The training should include an acquaintance, at first hand, of how people live, of problems that arise in the lives of families, whether they be within themselves or factors in the community over which they have no control, of the relation of social case work to social reform, of the agencies and forces in the community at work to alleviate, counteract, or correct evils encountered, of the inter-play of the one agency with others and their effect upon the situations met, of the function of the agency to which the student is attached, its machinery, technique, and aims. She should do at least one thorough investigation, carrying the situation on through treatment planned and instituted by her. She should be helped to see reasons behind each step, encouraged to ask questions, raise doubts, and criticisms. She should be expected to measure up to staff workers-in-training. She should learn to organize a day's field work wisely, record situations clearly and with color, dictate with some degree of ease, prepare statistics on cases worked on, understand budget-making, telephone in a business-like way, write letters, keep the day book, become resourceful in studying records when temporarily out of work, fit into the office group, and acquire general working habits that will help in any position. She should be helped to an appreciation of professional standards, an alert awareness of need for further training, and a wholesome regard for the aims of other agencies. She should be given an honest appraisal of her own work, recommendations regarding personal fitness for social work in general, and, if she contemplates entering the field of the agency she is with temporarily, for that work in particular. Above all, if she is good material she should get at least a beginning of a point of view that seeks to understand, that is not hasty, is neither sentimental nor hard, that can meet trying situations impersonally, and can enjoy struggling against intangible delays and disappointments.

The main problem of organizing field work so that it may be most helpful to the student, client, and agency raises another question: How much responsibility should an agency assume for the training of stu-

dents who have no intention of entering that agency's field? How much professional responsibility has a family agency, for instance, to train future medical, children's, or psychiatric social workers? Should any agency be expected to absorb a large group of inexperienced, time-consuming students who plan only to use the experience thus gained as a stepping stone to a different, specialized field? Each agency reaches a saturation point in training beyond which it cannot wisely or honestly go. This point may be reached because of size of case load in any one district, dearth of type of problems needed for novices, inability of the supervisor to handle more people, lack of time of the supervisor to devote to training, inadequacy of staff and office facilities. If by accepting too many students, staff workers-in-training are neglected, general case work supervision lags, and undue pressure is placed on the supervisor, or staff standards of work fall, clients suffer, and the community gets less than it has a right to expect. Then it becomes essential to limit student intake. An agency that demands certain preliminary training of its staff may well require the same of the students it accepts. If it must limit still further it seems permissible to accept first those students who plan to continue in its field and to suggest to those others it accepts that one year in that particular field, even two, will give only a beginning and foundation of training, that real training in any field is specialized and of slow growth, a constant learning process for those who have professional interest. Since agencies equipped to train are limited, agencies which are so equipped should be willing, up to the saturation point, to train for the sake of raising professional standards, of giving to a larger number in the community the services of as well trained social workers as possible; that is, of workers who have been tried in the day-by-day encounter with real, current, vital problems, who have learned not only how to analyze situations according to theory and to diagnose a recorded history, but to grapple with vexatious problems of living, troubled people. To the supervisor who is keenly interested in training there comes little worry about the promising student, whether she plans to go to another agency or remain.

If she develops a marked aptitude for the particular work she is doing, it frequently captivates her interest and she stays. If she goes, her work, while she is being trained, has injured neither her nor the agency.

Concerning the unpromising student, the one who may possibly fit into some other type of social work, but can catch little more than a glimmer of ideals actuating the work of the agency she is sent to, a question constantly reasserts itself: Should the agency devote time and energy, permitting her to dawdle along with its clients, never delving below the surface, or should it eliminate her? If her work is not actively bad, the harm she does can be reduced to a minimum. Her stay in the agency can bring to her a new understanding and a wider sympathy, but this she could get in some measure through group conferences. Only too often such a student emerges from a period of training labelled as a worker trained by such and such an agency. Training supervisors feel increasingly the injustice of this—not only to the agency but to the student. Having gleaned only the superficialities, the student sees no unexplored depths and believes she has a moderately complete conception of the work of the agency. If an agency, for the sake of professional standards, must struggle with mediocre students, unqualified for its particular job, the school should

recognize the service by differentiating in the report which they give the agency to which the student finally goes. The supervising case worker should be expected to submit to the school comprehensive reports of the students she has trained. Unless these reports are used, however, as an aid in evaluating the students' work, they become an imposition on the time of a busy case worker, and through her on the work of the society. Again, there is need for close co-operation and conference between the teacher in the school and the teacher in the field.

The training job is a fascinating one. The supervising case worker gets to know her students well, "individualizes" them, explores the field with them, glimpses their possibilities and limitations. By traveling with them through the byways of developing technique she re-examines reasons, brushes up on her own case work procedure, and gains through the experience. To the district the students bring fresh enthusiasm, polished theory, and diversified avenues of approach; to the school they take practical responsibility, actual experience, and conflicting reactions. They form a good medium, helping to keep the school in touch with reality and the agency in touch with social thought outside the limited borders of its own job. They can, if care be exercised, become assets well worth developing.

THE PHILANTHROPIST CONSIDERS BRAHMS

THE Philanthropist was in his usual autumn botheration over his begonias. Every summer he would pack into a yellow Ford truck, pot by pot, the precious begonias and cart them off upstate to his Adirondack garden. There, in a semi-circular bed, he would carefully set them out for a vacation stretch in the dark soil and there all July, August, and September would he weed, water, slip and otherwise tend them, writing the while a never-ending volume on *The Begonia Family*. His return to town likewise would be signalized by great repottings and transpottings; and Jane, knowing his habits, was careful to avoid visiting him until plants and planter had become acclimated to city life again. Unfortunately, this autumn, a certain delicate pink begonia had failed to become adjusted, shedding its leaves plaintively beyond all reason, so when Jane

put her head in at the door the Philanthropist's "How-do" sounded so ominous that she almost retreated. After noting the weather signs, however, Jane advanced cautiously, giving the flowers in the window a wide berth, and sat down in her usual chair by the fireplace.

The Philanthropist's eyes followed her gloomily. "Jane," he said, "Do you call yourself professionally a *moral reformer* or a *social investigator*?"

"Neither," said Jane cheerfully. "A moral reformer sounds to me —"

"While you are answering that," said the Philanthropist, "look at that perfidious begonia losing its leaves in a ridiculous way."

"I think, to be truthful, they both sound horrid," said Jane. "Is it the artificial heat that makes a begonia droop so?"

"It is most certainly *not* the heat," said the Philanthropist crossly. "Do you fancy that I have been raising begonias for forty-seven years to let them die of artificial heat?—though where you find heat in this room is a mystery to me. It's dying of sheer perversity, if you must know. No, don't touch it. It won't bear handling."

"I wasn't going near it," said Jane, "I never do—and if you aren't nicer to me I won't stay."

"Have a peppermint," said the Philanthropist, offering her a square brown Rookwood china box. Jane had once told him that his book on *The Begonia Family* showed a great deal of case work influence and since then he suspected her of laughing at him. The peppermint, however, introduced a peaceful note and the Philanthropist went on more amiably. "I told the Senior Warden something of the sort about reforming and investigating both 'sounding horrid,' as you put it, but when I said 'case worker' to him he raised his eyebrows and said 'Ah'—if you know what I mean."

Jane laughed. "Well, speaking of social investigators—"

"Exactly," said the Philanthropist. "Take Brahms for instance. The reason I go to the Philadelphia Orchestra is because that chap Stokowski has the sense not to treat Brahms as if he had a message. Everyone else plays the C Minor with dimmed lights, incense and genuflections. Brahms, poor fellow, wanted to be liked and understood, not worshipped."

"I am three hundred and ninety-eight on the waiting list for a subscription seat," murmured Jane.

"Eh?" queried the Philanthropist.

"I was just saying how much everyone seemed to enjoy the Philadelphia Orchestra," said Jane.

"Why wouldn't they," said the Philanthropist. "It's all on account of the way the orchestra plays Brahms. You can take my word for it. Now the adagio has no more of a message than my cook's tom cat. It's pure lyric."

"Speaking of moral reformers—" began Jane.

"Quite," said the Philanthropist. "I was coming to that. If there is a message in the

C Minor it's in that momentous exordium at the very beginning. Ta dum—the Scripture moveth us—*un poco sostenuto*—in sundry places—ta dum—*ma con brio*. Dum, dum dum. . . . Why don't you answer my question, by the way?"

"I am trying to," answered Jane. "I think the way case work first reaches a lot of people is in a sort of soul saving. Occasionally the churches ask one to come and talk to a 'Woman's Organization'—the human not the technical side of your work would be more appealing—that kind of thing always reduces me to fury—as if anyone could tell one from the other. At any rate people do often approach case work only through the emotions: Sometimes it's moral reforming and sometimes it's a poetical sort of thing. They go off the deep end about poverty, sickness, illegitimate babies, widowhood, and feel everything so keenly they can't talk sense. In college we used to argue on about art being simple, sensuous, and passionate. Well there are case workers who go at it as if they were writing sonnets to life—or psalms."

"I'm not an artist," said the Philanthropist, "and, thank Heaven, I do not know what I like either. Go on, though, about the emotions."

"The next stage after sensations and having ecstasies," went on Jane, "is *ideas*. You have no notion how hard they can take the scientific attitude, particularly the younger ones. They go in for intellect and experts and the new psychology and prevention. They peg out patterns for behavior and that's where it begins to look like social investigation rather than reforming—only of course 'analyzing' is the modern terminology. No one really talks about investigating any more. But no matter what it is called, the earmarks are the same. You must diagnose and get to the roots of things. No more trial and error method. No more hit or miss. You must know in advance how all the combinations will turn out and you must be perfectly sure that circles will always be circles, and triangles, triangles—because personality is built up in certain inevitable mosaics and the Last Judgment is held for children of preschool age."

"The cubists have always bored me," said the Philanthropist. "Now take begonias:

what good does it do to tell me they are all triangular. Each one is different. And as for accounting for their behavior, look at that wretched pink one. There's no excuse whatever for it. I started to tell you when you came in that the Senior Warden says the trouble with you social workers—What are you grinning at?" he broke off.

"I am not," said Jane, "grinning in the smallest particular. I was wondering whether the Senior Warden was interested in your begonias."

"Interested!" snorted the Philanthropist, "Why he doesn't know flora from fauna. Interested! He wouldn't recognize a daisy if he saw one. Interested! I wouldn't discuss begonias with him for a hundred dollars. Interested—him! What he said was that you social workers—"

"Oh," said Jane.

The Philanthropist looked at her. "Oh yourself," said he. "The cheek of you youngsters—you think you discovered men and women; you're sure you discovered children: You're too smart to live and that's the truth. Go on—do all the talking about case work if you think you know so much more than the Senior Warden. What's the stage after scientific behavior—and pure intellect?"

"First interviews, diagnosis, transference, analysis," went on Jane serenely, "all play their part in making this case work, but I don't believe that's all. There's another stage."

"I'm listening," said the Philanthropist ironically.

"It's not so easy to define. It has both the other stages in it. There's thought, of course, and feeling and method and interpretation and science; but somehow there comes to be a theme in it just as in music. There's a sense of mass and balance and line and harmony; there's composition. Case work isn't just a study of social conditions, or mere understanding of personality and environment, or skill in handling situations; but it is a dynamic approach to people, with proportion, balance, integration as its signal achievement. Case work means creative fingering at life. That's why Brahms shouldn't be played as if he had a message, isn't it? The C Minor is blocked out of the eternal rhythm of things—only *he* made it, so

it's music. It might have been family relationships, just as well, and if a case worker had—Oh! I don't know. Is that cheek?"

"One must have, I fancy, a great gift for orchestration to do family case work," said the Philanthropist soberly.

"How jolly of you," cried Jane. "The wood wind figures, the sweep of the strings, only sometimes they are muted; the C Major la, la, la of the horn, that's where the husband comes in; the flutes—those are the sisters over in Jersey; the piccolo, that's Nick the truant—and all those red-headed young trombones."

"You are much too concrete," said the Philanthropist. "People aren't like instruments."

"Well there *are* relationships, anyway," said Jane, "Cadences, balances, modulations, crescendos, interweavings of melody—"

"Tonality, consonance, counterpoint," finished off the Philanthropist. "What nice words they are to be sure. Have another peppermint?" Jane shook her head. "There's one thing, though," he said after a pause, "even if it isn't just moral reforming or social investigation or emotions or ideas, it isn't just orchestration either. Haven't you left something out? I'm old-fashioned, but what about God?"

Jane considered this. "Some people say God is a sublimation," she murmured.

The Philanthropist wagged a finger at her. "Now you're talking like the Senior Warden."

"Did he say God was a sublimation?" asked Jane, really startled.

The Philanthropist first growled and then laughed. "I owed you one on the Senior Warden. No, he most certainly did not. I meant in my simple and childlike way to indicate that you were talking through your hat!" There was a pause. "To use your phrase," he remarked thoughtfully, "isn't this just where case work goes off at the deep end?"

"It does so," said Jane.

"And what would you find?" asked the Philanthropist.

"I am not sure, but I think there might be stars all along the bottom, if one were to look," said Jane.

"Well I'd look if I were you," said the Philanthropist.

STREAM PICTURES

FROM

FAMILY RECORDS

A destructive force accomplishes so much with such finality in an instant. A constructive force, in contrast, works against odds, works with infinite patience with treacherous elements on every hand.

FRANCES LESTER WARNER

A TALE OF TWO CONTINENTS AND THREE COUNTRIES

EIGHT-year-old Johnny's tear-stained face peered just around the office door. He was a pale, sweet-faced lad. He had been at the office once before that afternoon but, as Miss B was away, he did not get the various articles of food for which his mother had sent him. On his arrival home he had been accused of not going on the errand, of lying in general, and his face had been slapped, and his ears boxed. No wonder his face was tear-stained. His mother's ill temper was an old story. The neighbors talked of cruel whippings, but as she constantly quarrelled with them, it was impossible to tell what was fact and what was gossip. The boy, himself, had evidently been trained to keep his mouth shut about what happened at home.

Mrs. Annie Reed, as we shall call this mother, had been a widow for two years. She lived in a three room shack on the edge of a small Ohio city. It was heated from the cook-stove. It contained only a few pieces of furniture, and these were commonly covered with odds and ends of clothing. Any part that showed was thick with dust. Occasionally a spasm of orderliness transformed the rooms, and they looked almost bright and cosy.

There was a large yard, with here and there bits of flowering shrubbery. Tall elms told of a dignity and grace even so small a place might have had. This was only one of many "might-have-beens" in the Reed family.

Mrs. Reed was a small woman. She had a fondness for clothes that were over-trimmed and hats that were dazzling. Her eyes were her most puzzling feature; they were of the cold, glassy blue which Miss B

remembered in the marbles she played with as a child. These, with her long nose and thin lips, made a combination not improved by ill temper. As one passed her on the street one could not imagine her as the heroine or the vampire of the tragic tale that was slowly brought to light. That tale involved the ruin of families, and threatened the ruin of Johnny, too.

It was the danger to Johnny that first aroused the interest of Miss B. But long before her advent, the Reed family had been a problem. Mr. Reed had died of tuberculosis. He had been a British "Tommy," and had been badly crippled in the world war. The neighbors, pitying Mrs. Reed's plight, had at first made little gifts of food, but received only angry words for thanks. Then they tried to give Johnny good things to eat when he came to play with their children, but she seemed determined that he should play with the rough boys who lived next door, and who had been in the Juvenile Court for stealing. After a time she developed symptoms of tuberculosis, and the city nurse made an effort to show her how to care for her health. Members of the churches tried to help, but no one seemed to gain her confidence. When she had a slight hemorrhage she became alarmed and allowed the nurse to take her to a good sanatorium. But in a week she was back, having left the sanatorium in a fury, and refused further help from any one.

It was not long before the hard work necessary to support herself and Johnny told upon the little strength that remained. She became ill; help was needed. By this time, a family society had been established, and she applied at its office. The city nurse had already told Miss B, the secretary, of her difficulties. Volunteer workers had discussed the situation. All were in despair, and believed nothing could be done with Mrs. Reed, and little for her. For months Miss B's experience seemed to point to the same conclusion. She tried every method of approach, each avenue of friendly advance, but always met with a stone-wall of stubborn indifference or persistent bad temper. Arguments and threats alike were in vain. Mrs. Reed was not a "mental case." Although certain surface appearances might indicate a peculiar mental condition, a long study of

the situation showed that this was not the cause of the present trouble. Ugly stories hinted that her moral character was at fault. Perhaps there was a skeleton in the closet, and she was afraid to open the door.

Mrs. Reed began to go out as a housekeeper, but only for good-for-nothing drunken men. The situation became so bad that it seemed best to take advantage of the law providing for the deportation of dependent aliens. An attempt was made to arrange for her return to England, but this involved endless delay in obtaining all the papers. The difficulties were increased because Mrs. Reed refused to give up any papers pertaining to her entry into the United States, although she persistently asked to be sent to England. At the same time she refused to say where she had lived or who her relatives were. The only hint was the mention one day of a sister, Mary Murphy, who lived in the small English city of D. Meanwhile Johnny was being turned into a bad boy by the neighbors' children and Miss B thought he must be taken from his mother. At this juncture Mrs. Reed became seriously ill with double pneumonia, and died after a two days' illness.

The funeral was doubly tragic. No one came but the man for whom Mrs. Reed had kept house for a few weeks—one of the most disreputable drunkards in town. Little Johnny was there, of course, and the social worker. It was a cold, rainy, dreary day, as if the very heavens wished to fill up the tale of misery.

What should be done for Johnny was now the problem. Mrs. Reed had carried her secret to the grave, and it might have been allowed to remain there but for Johnny's interests. For the time being Johnny was placed in the Children's Home. The kind-hearted undertaker had been appointed administrator of the "estate," and as a small sum of money was found, a bank was made guardian of the lad's funds.

It was thought that Johnny had been born in Canada. Among Mrs. Reed's belongings was found a small trunk, filled with trinkets, papers and photographs. The undertaker and Miss B almost wore them out trying to discover a word or a scribble of useful information. Apparently there were no passports for either Mr. or Mrs. Reed. It looked

as though they had been destroyed, but later it was thought that the Reeds had come across the Canadian border without passports at Niagara Falls in the guise of travelers or sight-seers.

The newspaper clippings showed that Mr. Reed had been quite popular in his company. He had been the singer, comedian, the planner of merry times. Some photographs showed that he was tall, handsome, and frank-faced. A picture of his shop turned up. It appeared that he had been a tailor, and was particularly proud of his shop. But there was no name of the city or even of the photographer. All these treasures were placed in safe keeping for Johnny.

Meanwhile Miss B began to follow the only clue that existed. In February 1923 she dispatched a letter to the Charity Organization Society of the small English city of D, which Mrs. Reed had mentioned, asking that society to see if they could locate Mrs. Reed's sister, Mrs. Mary Murphy. By the end of March came a letter from England, with startling contents. The sister had said that Johnny was not Mrs. Reed's child at all, and that she was not Mrs. Reed. Her husband's name was Roberts. While she and her husband were in Canada she had run away with John Reed. Mrs. Murphy thought that Johnny was an illegitimate child of Mr. Roberts. At all events Mrs. Roberts and John Reed took him with them when they fled. Mrs. Murphy said they had returned to England. So had Mr. Roberts, and he had told Mrs. Murphy that her sister was dead. This Mrs. Murphy did not believe. If Mrs. Murphy was well informed, another element of mystery had been added to Johnny's fate. But Miss B was not satisfied with the story, and wrote again to the English society.

The reply enclosed a letter from Mr. Street, the father of Johnny's real mother. This letter said that her name was Annie, which was also our Mrs. Reed's name. She was also about the same age as Mrs. Reed. The father stated that his daughter had married John Reed in England and that the couple had gone to Canada after the husband had been wounded in the world war. While Annie Reed was ill John had run away with Annie Porter Roberts, taking little Johnny, and leaving another child, Emily, with her

mother. Mr. Street was sure that his daughter was alive somewhere in Canada. This was the first word that had been told of a sister. Johnny had never mentioned her.

Two weeks later a personal letter arrived from the grandfather, Mr. Street. It was the heart-rending letter of a father who had been seeking a lost daughter, whom he knew needed protection. He was ready to overlook everything and offered to care for the grandchildren, and hoped to find Annie as well. Five years ago, just after being deserted by her husband, Annie fell very ill and was cared for by the Salvation Army in a wee Canadian village. They placed Emily while the mother was in the hospital. After her health returned they placed her in a boarding house in the village of A— with a Mrs. Wilson. Without waiting to hear from her husband or knowing what had become of him, Annie had married again. Mr. Street did not know her new husband's name or where they lived, other than that it was somewhere in Canada.

After learning this, Miss B visited little Johnny trying to learn what he could remember of any people or events, but his memory seemed to be a complete blank. Later, after the whole story was completed, Miss B felt sure that Johnny had been trained to know nothing for so long that he mechanically kept information back, although he and Miss B were on unusually friendly terms. Johnny seemed to like the Children's Home. He was very proud of his victories over the other boys (who had promptly picked on the newcomer to test his prowess), exclaiming, "I beat 'em. I knocked them down!" Henceforth he was a popular and admired boy.

With the story gradually scrambling itself together Miss B sent the five-year-old clues and her very slight information to the family society in a Canadian city asking whether they had any possible means of verifying these meagre details. To this society should be given great credit, for through the records which they furnished the whole story was made clear.

In about ten days a complete record and history of Johnny's mother and little sister Emily was received. Five years ago the Children's Aid Society of another town had taken charge of Emily. After Annie Street Reed had gone to board at the place secured

for her by the Salvation Army she had married the son of the proprietress, Mrs. Wilson. He proved to be a drunken, dissipated wretch, and they led a dreadful life. Annie, herself, became a heavy drinker and her morals were so low that Emily was seriously neglected. A third child, born during her second marriage, was in terrible condition. The Children's Aid Society placed both of these children in foster homes where they still remain. Annie told the same story that we have heard in fragments. She married John, a British soldier, in England just before the war. After he was wounded he came home and decided to go to Canada to live. At the time of the birth of each of the children Annie went home to her family in England. Some photographs taken at these different times almost foreshadow the coming tragedy. The second picture looks sad and careworn, quite in contrast to the first happy, cheerful one.

While they were in J—, Canada, Mr. Reed's infatuation for Mrs. Roberts became more keen. He had been unfaithful to his wife for a year. During Annie's illness he took little Johnny and ran away with Mrs. Roberts, and had not been heard from since. This was followed by the serious illness and desperate poverty of Annie Reed. She told the same story of the Salvation Army and her later marriage to Mr. Wilson.

A second investigation and visit to the mother of little Johnny showed that the old, sad state of affairs still existed, and so it was impossible even to consider sending Johnny back to her. Miss B later wrote her a personal letter, enclosing a recent photograph of the little boy.

Soon, more necessary facts arrived from England—marriage certificates, birth certificates and the photographs which identified Johnny and his father. At last all the stories merged into one, and Miss B was sure of the proofs of all the facts of the long story.

The grandfather Street had asked to have little Johnny, promising a good home and education for the lad, and the final report of the possibilities of the new home was very good. Mr. Street had a little store with good trade, and a comfortable home. Respected by all they would surely be the best people to whom to send the little British boy, with the assurance of a good future.

After this there were many trips to the Juvenile Court explaining the case to the judge and showing all the Canadian and English reports. Finally the judge gave his decision that the child be sent to England. Trips and letters to the British Consul took still more time, but just before New Year's Day Miss B personally took little Johnny to

New York to put him on the ocean steamer and to meet the kind friends who were to look after him on the boat until he could be put in the hands of the (already notified) English Travellers' Aid in Liverpool.

Later letters from England gave the news of Johnny's arrival in England and of his well-being.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ART OF HELPING PEOPLE OUT OF TROUBLE:
Karl de Schweinitz. Houghton Mifflin Company, Cambridge, 1924, 231 pp.

In spite of the handicap of its title, which may deter the type of person who will hastily and erroneously conclude that it is a sentimental performance, this book is a very clear and effective presentation of what may be called the newer technique in social case work. The "art" is that developed by social case workers, and is largely psychological, revolving around the factors of personality. No psychological or psychiatric terms are used, which is a distinct advantage. The method is scientific, which convinces one further that the best definition of science is that which designates it as "trained and organized common sense." And while the stressing of these principles and their application may be termed the newer technique, there is no doubt but what successful social workers, blessed with much common sense and a keen understanding of people, have long been practicing it, though perhaps not fully aware of the significance of what they were doing.

Applying to the individual the principle that adjustment is the law of life, Mr. de Schweinitz considers trouble as unsuccessful or maladjustment, and then develops his art of helping people out of trouble. The time to help is when a request for help is made. In order to help, the case worker must know and understand the person—his characteristics, resources, current history and background—in a word, his personality. As an aid to such understanding of the person comes the latter's self-revelation, which may be spontaneous or induced. If the latter, it becomes what might be called the art of getting people to reveal their secrets. All this, it seems to me, is pretty intimate, and is no job for the novice; witness the caricature in *Babbitt*. The case worker gathers all the facts possible from associates and others until he has the whole story; this data, plus the person's self-revelation, make it possible to understand him and help solve his problem. Then comes the need of "facing the facts," which is really a chapter on psychoanalysis. The interpre-

tation of the person to himself and the explanation of one person to another are necessary steps. The plan of readjustment must be the person's own plan: "It is by freeing a man so that he can express himself and by stimulating him to do his own thinking that the best plans are developed." Responsibility must be cultivated and motivation provided. The latter may come through appealing to his desires or through the dynamics of religion, adventure, achievement, opportunity for emotional expression, and so forth. By these means adjustment may be effected.

The process is not easy, though one is tempted to so conclude from the cases cited, in spite of the author's warning that adjustment was not made easily or quickly. To this questioning age, many of the cases (and this applies to many books on the subject) appear to contain the element of magic. I wonder if it would not be possible, when using the skeleton of case histories, to indicate more effectively the passage of time and the difficulties encountered. Or is the trouble due to the fact that sufficient details are not given? The general public, which still thinks in terms of material relief, needs to be brought to an understanding of the real services rendered by agencies doing family social work.

It is good to see books of this sort appear. *Children Astray* is an example in another field. The academic psychologist would do well to read them; he has much that is practical to learn. *The Art of Helping People out of Trouble* is addressed to parents, teachers, employers, and neighbors. They could all benefit from an understanding of its principles and their applications, even to themselves, but on the other hand, the book may just as well be interpreted as a plea for the specialist, the social case worker. There is no cut and dried procedure in this art, no rule of thumb to be applied; one needs training and background; and not every one possesses the capacity to understand and help other people. The author presents his thesis so well and so simply, and with such optimism, that one is in danger of concluding that it is all very easy. Instead, this

art has its scientific basis and cannot be successfully practiced if the latter is neglected. After all, science is really man's most highly developed instrument for adjustment.

MAURICE R. DAVIE
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BOOKS ON HOME MAKING PROBLEMS

GUIDE TO LITERATURE OF HOME AND FAMILY LIFE:

Robertson, Annie Isabel. A Classified Bibliography for Home Economics with Use and Content Annotations. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1924.

FOOD AND HEALTH: McFee, Inez N. A Book for the Lay Reader Who Believes that Health is What We Make It. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1924.

HOME ECONOMICS IN EDUCATION: Bevier, Isabel. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1924.

ECONOMICS OF THE FAMILY: Taber, C. W., and Wardall, Ruth A. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1923.

HOUSE AND HOME: Gray, Greta. A Manual and Text-Book of Practical House Planning. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1923.

LAUNDERING: Balderston, L. Ray. Home-Institution. J. B. Lippincott, 1924.

CHEMISTRY APPLIED TO HOME AND COMMUNITY: Beery, Pauline G. A Textbook and Laboratory Manual. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1923.

THE HOMEMAKER TRAINED BY KITCHENGARDEN METHODS: Keech, Mabel Louise. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1924.

These books will prove helpful or not helpful to the family social worker for varied reasons. The first book (*Guide to Literature of Home and Family Life*) is a long and detailed bibliography; the following headings of certain of the main divisions show the wide range in subjects covered: The Home and the Family; The Child; Food and the Family; Home Culture and Sociability; Home and the School; Health and the Home; Science, Industries and the Home. In the appendices are lists of names of publishers, of "organizations working with and for the home and family," and other material to which reference has frequently to be made in various connections. The entire book shows evidence of careful selection, thoughtful grouping, accurate annotation and listing. Probably any continued use of the book will reveal certain inadequacies in treatment, as is usually found in the use of any ex-

tensive bibliography. However, it would seem well worth recommending as a reference book for the local public library, if not for the office or school library, because of its effective combination of references to all sorts of material of value to the social worker.

Less enthusiasm can be felt for the next book on our list for review, *Food and Health*, by McFee. According to the title page, the author has also written a book entitled *The Teacher, The School, and the Community*. In her acknowledgments she states that it was necessary "constantly to consult other authorities, especially those whose training and experience have given them peculiar right to speak on questions of diet." The book is a curious medley of the expressions of opinions of many persons, including those who are competent to speak on a certain subject because of scientific training, and also those (including the author) who are quite willing to speak on similar subjects on the basis of personal prejudice. For instance, you have a fairly good presentation of certain scientific material on food values and the essentials in nutrition; and you also have many statements of a type illustrated by the following quotations: "Celery is good medicine. Counteracts conditions leading to rheumatism, nervousness, neuralgia, and goitre." "Onions dissolve uric acid and absorb poisons. They are invaluable for nervous trouble, insomnia, coughs, and croup. Our grandmothers pinned their faith to onion syrup and today science has not outstripped them. Cases of nervous prostration have been cured by a diet largely composed of onions."

Through the book are scattered some good suggestions but the frequency of inaccurate statements, usually made as sweeping generalizations and couched in the most authoritative form, makes the book a rather dangerous one to recommend for popular reading.

The remaining books are planned primarily for use as school textbooks, although parts will prove also of value to the social worker, such as certain of the discussions on budgets in *Economics of the Family*, the material on reducing the cost of shelter, in *House and Home*, and the chapter on Beliefs Concerning Food Requirements in the book on *Chemistry*. In *The Homemaker Trained by Kitchen Garden Methods*, are various suggestions for the development of interesting and instructive work for groups of girls of different ages. Much of the subject matter, especially in the last book, might also be used to advantage as the basis for talks on better home making at mothers' meetings and in work with individual families.

EMMA A. WINSLOW

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR:

The Social Service class of the Pennsylvania College for Women, now in training with the Associated Charities of Pittsburgh, wishes to submit the following criticism of the article in the January number of *THE FAMILY* entitled "Treatment by Letter."

The letter, we find, is well planned and carefully written, following an outline which treats the material in logical order. It would unquestionably make Mr. Smith think about his misdeeds, for the writer points out very boldly and forcefully his shortcomings.

It is difficult to judge a letter of this kind when we know little or nothing of the social background of the family or of the man's personality. Regardless of this fact, however, we feel that men in general would be antagonized by this scolding, nagging type of treatment, and the main purpose of the letter, which is to bring the man back, would be defeated.

The author's attitude throughout the letter is that of superiority, which immediately places a barrier between her and the client. The co-operation she receives will depend upon her success in convincing the man of her desire to understand his point of view. She intimates that her knowledge of the case is so complete that he would be able to add nothing of value to it.

We feel that the writer's reference to having read the man's letters is an unfortunate one, for any man would resent having his intimate letters to his wife read by an outsider.

To tell a man that he is a failure and a disappointment to everyone would create a very undesirable psychological effect.

The writer's description of the wife seems to be an exaggeration, for she is represented as an almost perfect human being, enduring trial and suffering without a murmur. The husband's reaction to this would probably be doubt as to her thorough knowledge of his wife's personality.

One of the greatest fault of the letter is its length. One would hardly blame a man, in Mr. Smith's position, for destroying the letter before he finished reading it. To expect a man to read a scolding such as this, and keep a sane attitude to the end, would be to expect the impossible.

The author of the letter has failed to recognize any good qualities in Mr. Smith. If she had suggested her belief in him, recognized that he had a side in the case, and asked him to supply it, this might have proved an incentive for him to return—which after all is the purpose of the letter.

THE SOCIAL SERVICE CLASS,
PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

AND WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR? An Outline for the Study of Race Relations in America: The Inquiry. Association Press, 347 Madison Avenue, New York City.

FAMILY WELFARE WORK IN A METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY: Sophonisba Preston Breckinridge. University of Chicago Press, 1924, 938 pp.

INSTINCT—A Study in Social Psychology: L. L. Bernard. Henry Holt, New York, 1924, 550 pp.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY: Bibliography. Russell Sage Foundation Bulletin No. 68, December, 1924.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICES: Shelby M. Harrison. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1924, 685 pp.

WOMAN'S SHARE IN SOCIAL CULTURE: Anna Garlin Spencer. (2d Edition) J. B. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia, 1925, 413 pp.

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